IN THE CLAIMS:

No Amendments have been made to the claims. Therefore, the claims are provided below for the convenience of the Examiner:

1.   (Previously Presented) A support fee setting method using a system comprising a computer, a user information registering section connected to the computer, the user information registering section including a user information database, an inquiry history registering section connected to the computer, the inquiry history registering section including a job-to-point conversion table, an evaluation section including a point conversion table, the support fee setting method comprising:

storing a user name and a grade for service in a one-to-one correspondence in the user information database;

receiving an inquiry from a user with a computer support activity by a support person;

accessing the job-to-point conversion table where jobs are converted to points such that a job responding to the content of the inquiry requiring higher technique is set with a higher point;

retrieving a first data corresponding to one point derived from one of the jobs among the points from the job-to-point conversion table;

accessing the user information database and retrieving a second data corresponding to the grade of the user, the user information database storing the user name and the grade for service for the user;

retrieving a third data corresponding to an actual cost for responding to the computer support activity for the user, the actual cost being inputted by the support person;

accessing the point conversion table where an amount is set for each grade such that the point derived is converted to a lower amount as the grade becomes higher;

retrieving a fourth data corresponding to an amount according to the grade of the user;

computing a support fee based on the first data, the second data, the third data and the fourth data as a total amount and a total of the actual cost for responding to the computer support activity; and

outputting a statement with the support fee and the grade of the user.

2.   (Canceled)

2

3. (Previously Presented) The support fee setting method according to claim 1, wherein:

the points derived and the actual cost are stored in a history information database stored in the inquiry history registering section in correspondence with the user name; and

the points of the user and actual cost are obtained by referring to said history information database.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously Presented) The support fee setting method according to claim 1, wherein:

the total amount is a total of the amounts for a predetermined period;

a grade shifting value according to an aggregate of total amount is obtained by using a grade conversion table, in which an amount and a corresponding shift in grade are stored, the grade conversion table being stored in the evaluating section; and

the grade of the user in the user information database is updated based on the grade shifting value.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Previously Presented) The support fee setting method according to claim 3, wherein:

the total amount is a total of the amounts for a predetermined period;

a grade shifting value according to an aggregate of total amount is obtained by using a grade conversion table, in which an amount and a corresponding shift in grade are stored, the grade conversion table being stored in the evaluating section; and

the grade of the user in the user information database is updated based on the grade shifting value.

8-12. (Canceled)